



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

MEETING OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

5-9 MAY, 2014

Statement of Finland by Ms Kirsti Aarnio, Ambassador, Post-2015

Thank you, Mr Co-Chair,

We firmly believe that promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies based on respect for human rights contributes significantly to poverty eradication and sustainable development. There is neither doubt nor lack of evidence that conflict and violence undermines development and hinders the achievement of the MDGs. The fight against violence and sustainable peace needs to be placed high on the post 2015 agenda, addressing i) reduction of violence, and ii) drivers of armed conflict and conflict. We emphasize the importance of transparent and sustainable management and use of natural resources - and equal benefit sharing - for maintaining peaceful and non-violent inclusive societies.

It is our firm belief that a separate sustainable development goal on "Peaceful societies and freedom from violence" is needed. Furthermore, we also propose a separate goal on "Good governance and the rule of law", as we have proposed earlier. Strengthening the rule of law, good governance and democracy is an essential prerequisite for sustainable peace and development.

Under the Goal on Peaceful societies and freedom from violence we can support the targets presently proposed by the co-chairs. In addition, we would like to see four more targets added as follows:

- 1) reduce the number of violent deaths, including of civilians in armed conflict,
- 2) strengthen the legitimacy, accountability and capacity of the security sector, that is the police and the judiciary,
- 3) reduce irresponsible trade in arms and conflict commodities as well as violence and other negative impacts associated with trade in illicit drugs, and
- 4) minimize the risks of conflicts by strengthening transparent, participatory and sustainable management and use of natural resources and increasing resilience to environmental shocks.

Strengthening the capacity of public institutions and the dialogue and trust between the state and its people can contribute greatly in promoting peace, stability and sustainable development. People from all social groups should feel safe and have confidence in security provision. It should be ensured that tensions, grievances and disputes resolved peacefully, inclusively and constructively. A crucial part of this agenda is ensuring that there are mechanisms in place for inclusive and meaningful political participation, freedom of speech and independent media, and transparent and accountable institutions that respect human rights, deliver security, justice, and social services and support job creation effectively and equally and prevent corruption. To ensure effective and sustainable steps towards peace and development, the post-2015 framework also needs to mainstream emphasis on non-discrimination and equality, transparency, accountability, participation and the inclusion of all groups in all the goals.

In promoting Good Governance and the Rule of Law we in general support your proposals and would have the following comments:

- On item a), we would like to add after ... at all levels: “and in the management of public finances”,
- We would revise item d) as follows: “Ensuring access to basic services for all, including legal identity and information on public finance management, public procurement and on the implementation of national development plans”,
- We would revise item f) so that it would read: “Secure enjoyment of basic civil and political rights by all, including guaranteeing freedom of media, association and speech”,
- Finally, we would add a target: “Promote inclusive, participatory decision-making processes at all levels, paying especially attention to women and vulnerable groups, as well as a strong civil society”.

We believe that inclusive and accountable societies, in which the principles of good governance, the rule of law and human rights are respected, are more likely to achieve the other development goals and economic growth. This is why we advocate a comprehensive view and a strong explicit focus on these universal principles in the Post 2015-discussion.

I thank you Mr. Co-Chair.